

Chapter No. 2181

16/SS02/R1073

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***SENATE
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
No. 594***

Originated in Senate

Elizabeth

Secretary

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 594

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE CIVIL RIGHTS LEGACY OF ROBERT E. JOHNSON OF GRENADA, MISSISSIPPI, AND EXTENDING THE CONDOLENCES OF THE LEGISLATURE TO HIS SURVIVING FAMILY.

WHEREAS, we are saddened to learn of the passing of Mississippi Civil Rights Pioneer Robert E. Johnson of Grenada, Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, Robert was born to the late Finley and Catherine Johnson on June 17, 1948, in Grenada, Mississippi. Being the sixth of seven children in the poor and segregated Town of Grenada, Robert learned the value of hard work and sacrifice; and

WHEREAS, he attended Carrie Dotson High School where he played football, and then entered Alcorn State University (formerly Alcorn College) on a full athletic scholarship. In 1966, the emergence of the Meredith March Against Fear would shape the course of Robert's life. Seeing Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in the streets of Grenada helped Robert decide that he couldn't let someone else do more for his hometown than he could. Robert came back to Grenada to join the Civil Rights Movement and worked

to establish voting rights in Mississippi. He joined the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) as a Field Project Director after becoming involved in the Movement; and

WHEREAS, his fight for Civil Rights with the SCLC led him to various travels throughout the United States and Africa. In 1971, Robert was jailed for refusing to be drafted into the military and was sentenced to five years. By the Grace of God, in 1972 he was released with a full pardon by President Gerald Ford after serving 18 months; and

WHEREAS, Robert continued his work with the SCLC, which led him to meet his wife, Mary Pitts, in Covington, Georgia. They fell in love and were married in November of 1974. They would later be blessed with two sons, Cleon and Marcus; and

WHEREAS, Robert began working for the Metro Atlanta Transit Authority (MARTA) as a Bus Operator in 1979, while also owning his own home construction and repair business. In 1985, Robert started attending Mt. Ephraim Baptist Church, and soon joined the church with his wife and children by his side. Robert served as a Trustee on the Official Board for a number of years. In December of 2002, Robert was ordained as a Deacon of Mt. Ephraim's Official Board. It was during this time Robert, Reverend Dr. Joseph Lowery and other grassroot workers in the Civil Rights Movement were honored with a trip to Durban, South Africa, where they met with South African Activist Nelson Mandela and others. Robert was a

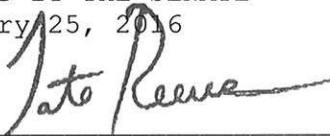
devoted servant of his church, family and the African-American community; and

WHEREAS, he is preceded in death by his parents and siblings Mildred Brown, George Johnson, Finley Johnson, Jr., and Charles Johnson. An advocate for the less fortunate among us, Robert Johnson was an example to others of how to live your convictions with courage and he will be missed by those who were fortunate to have known his special wisdom:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby pay tribute to the Civil Rights legacy of Robert E. Johnson of Grenada, Mississippi, and extend the condolences of the Legislature to his surviving family.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to the surviving family of Robert Johnson and be made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE
February 25, 2016



PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
March 3, 2016



SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES